

## Elite Opponents

# Ettins

By Andy Collins



This column aims to provide DMs with interesting opponents to pit against the PCs in their campaigns. Building off of a simple base -- typically a standard monster from the *Monster Manual* -- each column uses the building blocks provided in the rulebooks to craft a variety of foes. Through the addition of class levels or templates, or even via simple HD advancement, the creatures presented in this column are transformed from run-of-the-mill opponents into memorable foes. Check out this column every month for formidable enemies built from a different monster!

## The Ettin: Two Heads Are Better Than One

Capable of dealing massive amounts of damage, the ettin delivers a healthy dose of terror to the average adventurer. With two morningstars that can strike twice each for an average of 13 points per hit, the creature's full attack can reduce even a raging barbarian to tears. As such, ettins make effective encounters on their own or good minions for tougher giants and powerful warlords.

Still, the ettin has its weak points. As with many giants, its ability to threaten PCs drops off dramatically at higher levels. Since the ettin needs to get up close and personal to win a fight, high-level spellcasters and high-AC fighters can end its threat before it really begins. At these levels of play, the ettin's relatively low Will save renders it vulnerable to *confusion* spells and the like, and its AC can't stand up to a dedicated archer or fighter.

An average ettin doesn't have the ability scores to take up spellcasting, so its Will saves will never be terrific. But even though its weak points can't be completely overcome, a tougher-than-normal ettin can still put a serious fright into its opponents. Just keep in mind that its power comes in short bursts -- it doesn't have the staying power for a long-term fight, but if it can survive for even a couple rounds of melee, it's done its job. Thus, enhancing its short-term effectiveness is often the best bet for keeping it potent.



This article presents three extra-tough ettins (at CR 8, 10, and 11) that put a twist on the traditional two-headed giant.

## Grush: The Ettin Barbarian

Grush is a run-of-the-mill ettin barbarian. He works equally well as a lone opponent (perhaps a hunter cast out from his colony, or the last survivor of a dwarf-giant battle) or as part of a group. With two mouths to utter his raging howls, he makes quite a racket during a fight. To stage a particularly terrifying combat, add a couple more just like him and watch the blood fly.

**Grush:** Male ettin barbarian 2; CR 8; Large giant; HD 10d8+20 plus 2d12+4; hp 82; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +9; Grp +20; Atk +16 melee (2d6+7, masterwork morningstar) or +7 ranged (1d8+7, javelin); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (2d6+7, 2 masterwork morningstars) or +7 ranged (1d8+7, 2 javelins); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA rage 1/day; SQ fast movement, low-light vision, superior two-weapon fighting, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 24, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 11.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide -8, Listen +14, Search +1, Spot +10; Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack.

**Rage:** While Grush rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 10d8+40 plus 2d12+8; hp 106; AC 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19; Grp +22; Atk +18 melee (2d6+9, masterwork morningstar) or +7 ranged (1d8+9, javelin); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (2d6+9, 2 masterwork morningstars) or +7 ranged (1d8+9, 2 javelins); SV Fort +14, Will +7; Str 28, Con 19. His fit of rage lasts for 7 rounds.

**Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex):** This ability negates all attack and damage penalties for fighting with two weapons.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** Grush can react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. He retains his Dexterity bonus to AC regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible opponent.

*Possessions:* +1 breastplate, two masterwork morningstars, four javelins, *potion of cure serious wounds*, 600 gp.

## Broggen: The Ettin Dire Wereboar

Broggen was once a brawny but typically weak-willed example of ettinkind. As luck would have it, a pack of feral lycanthropic ogres chose the night that he fell asleep on guard duty to attack his band. But Broggen survived the assault and soon found himself far more powerful than he could ever have dreamed. Now he travels the land with a herd of boars, taking whatever he wants from the villages he finds.

**Broggen (Giant Form):** Male ettin afflicted dire wereboar; CR 10; Large giant (shapechanger); HD 10d8+20 plus 7d10+35; hp 168; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +12; Grp +23; Atk +18 melee (2d6+7, 2 morningstars); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (2d6+7, 2 morningstars) and +18 melee (2d6+6, morningstar); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ alternate form, boar empathy, low-light vision, scent, superior two-weapon fighting; AL N; SV Fort +14, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 25, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide -8, Listen +15, Search +1, Spot +14; Alertness, Cleave, Endurance, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Broggen can shift into dire boar form as though using the *polymorph* spell on himself, though his gear is not affected, he does not regain hit points for changing form, and only dire boar form can be assumed. He can also assume a bipedal humanoid form with prehensile hands and boarlike features. Changing to or from dire boar or hybrid form is a standard action. When slain, he reverts to his giant form, though he remains dead. Separated body parts retain their animal form, however. As an afflicted lycanthrope, Broggen finds this ability difficult to control.

**Boar Empathy (Ex):** In any form, Broggen can communicate and empathize with normal or dire boars. This ability gives him a +4 racial bonus on checks made to influence the animal's attitude and allows the communication of simple concepts and (if the animal is friendly) commands, such as "friend," "foe," "flee," and "attack."

**Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex):** This ability negates all attack and damage penalties for fighting with two weapons.

**Possessions:** Hide armor, two morningstars, *ring of protection* +1, nine amethysts (100 gp each), 2,900 gp.

**Broggen (Dire Boar Form):** Male ettin afflicted dire wereboar; CR 10; Large giant (shapechanger); HD 10d8+20 plus 7d10+35; hp 168; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +12; Grp +31; Atk +26 melee (1d8+22, gore); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA ferocity; SQ alternate form, boar empathy, damage reduction 5/silver, low-light vision, scent, superior two-weapon fighting; AL N; SV Fort +17, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 41, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide -5, Listen +15, Search +1, Spot +14; Alertness, Cleave, Endurance, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack.

**Ferocity (Ex):** Broggen is such a tenacious combatant that he continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Broggen can shift into ettin form as though using the *polymorph* spell on himself, though his gear is not affected, he does not regain hit points for changing form, and only ettin form can be assumed. He can also assume a bipedal humanoid form with prehensile hands and boarlike features. Changing to or from ettin or hybrid form is a standard action. When slain, he reverts to his giant form, though he remains dead. Separated body parts retain their animal form, however. As an afflicted lycanthrope, Broggen finds this ability difficult to control.

**Boar Empathy (Ex):** In any form, Broggen can communicate and empathize with normal or dire boars. This ability gives him a +4 racial bonus on checks made to influence the animal's attitude and allows the communication of simple concepts and (if the animal is friendly) commands, such as "friend," "foe," "flee," and "attack."

**Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex):** This ability negates all attack and damage penalties for fighting with two weapons.

**Broggen (Hybrid Form):** Male ettin afflicted dire wereboar; CR 10; Large giant (shapechanger); HD 10d8+20 plus 7d10+35; hp 168; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +12; Grp +31; Atk +26 melee (1d8+15, gore) or +26 melee (2d6+15, morningstar); Full Atk +26 melee (1d8+15, 2 gores) and +21 melee (1d6+7, 2 claws) or +26/+21/+16 melee (2d6+15, 2 morningstars) and +21 melee (1d8+7, 2 gores) and +21 melee (1d6+7, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA ferocity; SQ alternate form, boar empathy, damage reduction 5/silver, low-light vision, scent, superior two-weapon fighting; AL N; SV Fort +17, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 41, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide -5, Listen +15, Search +1, Spot +14; Alertness, Cleave, Endurance, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack.

**Ferocity (Ex):** Broggen is such a tenacious combatant that he continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Broggen can shift into dire boar form as though using the *polymorph* spell on himself, though his gear is not affected, he does not regain hit points for changing form, and only ettin or dire boar forms can be assumed. Changing to or from dire boar or ettin form is a standard action. When slain, he reverts to his giant form, though he remains dead. Separated body parts retain their animal form, however. As an afflicted lycanthrope, Broggen finds this ability difficult to control.

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**Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex):** This ability negates all attack and damage penalties for fighting with two weapons.

**Possessions:** Two morningstars, nine amethysts (100 gp each), 2,900 gp.

## Therrik: The Tauric Ettin-Elephant

The tauric template in *Savage Species* does not allow a giant as the base humanoid because of the limited number of animals to which a giant could reasonably be added. The tauric ettin-elephant Therrik is an example of a giant-animal combination that works surprisingly well.

The result of bizarre arcane experimentation, Therrik escaped captivity many months ago and now seeks to find a place for himself in the world. Unlike the typical ettin, Therrik has no evil tendencies, though his savage behavior can easily be mistaken for cruelty. He's just as likely to fall in with a band of ettins or hill giants, or become the leader of a tribe of orcs or ogres, as he is to find friendship with kinder creatures.

Therrik's Challenge Rating is estimated, based on the creature's immense physical power.

**Therrik:** Male tauric ettin-elephant; CR 11; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 21d8+105; hp 199; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +21; Grp +35; Atk +30 melee (2d6+10, slam) or +31 melee

(2d6+11, +1 *morningstar*) or +20 ranged (1d8+10, javelin); Full Atk +30 melee (2d6+10, slam) and +25 melee (2d6+5, 2 stamps) or +31/+26/+21/+16 melee (2d6+11, 2 +1 *morningstars*) and +25 melee (2d6+5, 2 stamps) or +20 ranged (1d8+10, 2 javelins); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA trample 2d8+15; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, superior two-weapon fighting; AL CN; SV Fort +17, Ref +12, Will +9; Str 30, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 11.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide -6, Listen +15, Search +2, Spot +15; Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor (x2), Iron Will, Power Attack.

**Trample (Ex):** As a standard action during his turn each round, Therrik can literally run over an opponent at least one size category smaller than himself. The trample deals 2d8+15 points of bludgeoning damage. A trampled opponent can attempt either an attack of opportunity at a -4 penalty or a DC 30 Reflex save for half damage.

**Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex):** This ability negates all attack and damage penalties for fighting with two weapons.

*Possessions:* +2 *hide armor/barding*, two +1 *morningstars*, eight javelins.

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## About the Author

By day, Andy Collins works as a senior developer in the Roleplaying R&D department at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. His credits include the *Player's Handbook* v.3.5, the *Draconomicon*, and the upcoming *Unearthed Arcana*. By night, however, he fights crime as a masked vigilante. Or maybe not.

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